

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1-64. (Canceled)

5 65. (Previously Amended) A bicycle fork, comprising:

a compression fluid chamber configured to decrease in volume during at least a portion of the compression of said fork;

a lock-out valve, said lock-out valve in fluid communication with said compression fluid chamber, and having at least two positions; wherein:

10 in a first position, fluid flow from said compression fluid chamber is substantially unrestricted by said lock-out valve, and

in a second position, fluid flow from said compression fluid chamber is at least partially blocked by said lock-out valve;

15 a first externally disposed on said fork, adjuster permitting external adjustment of said lock-out valve between at least said two positions;

a blow-off valve associated with said compression fluid chamber, said blow-off valve allowing flow from said compression fluid chamber in response to the pressure in said chamber being equal to or greater than a threshold pressure during compression of said fork; and

20 a second externally disposed on said fork adjuster, said second external adjuster permitting external adjustment of said threshold pressure;

whereby adjustments to said threshold pressure may be made without tools.

25 66. (Previously Amended) A method of operating a bicycle fork having lock-out and blow-off features, including the step of adjusting a threshold pressure at which said blow-off feature operates during compression of said fork, said adjustment step being performed externally of said fork without tools.

30 67. (Previously Amended) A method of making a bicycle fork, including the steps of:

- a) providing said fork with a lock-out valve;
- b) providing said fork with a blow-off valve having a threshold pressure during compression of said fork at which said blow-off valve opens and allows fluid flow there through;
- 5 c) providing said fork with the ability for its user to make tool-less adjustments of said threshold pressure externally of said fork.

68. (Previously Amended) A bicycle fork, comprising:

- 10 first and second telescopingly engaged tubes configured to move closer together during compression of said fork;
- an adjustable lock-out valve, said lock-out valve having a plurality of operator-selectable positions, one of said operator-selectable positions of said lock-out valve at least substantially inhibiting said first and second tubes from moving closer together when subjected to a range of compressive forces;
- 15 a manually adjustable blow-off valve capable of tool-less adjustment externally of said fork, said blow-off valve allowing said first and second tubes to move closer together in response to a pressure imparted on said valve during compression of said fork being equal to or greater than a operator-selectable threshold pressure when said lock-out valve is in its substantially inhibiting
- 20 movement position; said threshold pressure resulting from a force having a magnitude exceeding said range of compressive forces.

69. – 71. (Cancelled).

25 72. (Previously Amended) A bicycle fork, comprising:

- first and second tubes configured to move closer together during the compression of said fork;
- a manually adjustable lock-out valve, said lock-out valve having a plurality of operator selectable positions, one of said operator-selectable positions of said
- 30 lock-out valve at least substantially inhibiting said first and second tubes from moving closer together when subjected to a range of compressive forces;

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a manually adjustable blow-off valve capable of tool-less adjustment externally of said fork, said blow-off valve having a plurality of operator-selectable positions, each of said operator-selectable positions of said blow-off valve altering the magnitude of the force that must be imparted on said fork during compression of said fork for said first and second tubes to move closer together when said lock-out valve is in its substantially inhibiting movement position.

73. – 74. (Cancelled).

75. (Previously Presented) A bicycle fork, comprising:

a compression fluid chamber configured to decrease in volume during at least a portion of the compression of said fork;

a lock-out valve, said lock-out valve in fluid communication with said compression fluid chamber, and having at least two positions; wherein:

in a first position, fluid flow from said compression fluid chamber is substantially unrestricted by said lock-out valve, and

in a second position, fluid flow from said compression fluid chamber is at least partially blocked by said lock-out valve;

a first external adjuster permitting external adjustment of said lock-out valve between at least said two positions;

a blow-off valve associated with said compression fluid chamber, said blow-off valve allowing flow from said compression fluid chamber in response to the pressure in said chamber being equal to or greater than a threshold pressure during compression of said fork; and

a second external adjuster, said second external adjuster permitting external adjustment of said threshold pressure;

whereby adjustments to said threshold pressure may be made without tools.

76. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a bicycle fork having lock-out and blow-off features, including the step of adjusting a threshold pressure at which said

blow-off feature operates during compression of said fork, said adjustment step being performed without tools.

77. (Previously Presented) A method of making a bicycle fork, including the steps of:

- 5 a) providing said fork with a lock-out valve;
- b) providing said fork with a blow-off valve having a threshold pressure at which said blow-off valve opens and allows fluid flow there through during compression of said fork;
- 10 c) providing said fork with the ability for its user to make tool-less adjustments of said threshold pressure.

78. (Previously Presented) A bicycle fork, comprising:

- a compression fluid chamber;
- an adjustable lock-out feature, said adjustable lock-out feature in fluid
- 15 communication with said compression fluid chamber;
- a first external adjuster permitting external adjustment of said lock-out feature to vary the degree to which said lock-out feature allows fluid flow from said compression chamber;
- a blow-off feature associated with said compression fluid chamber, said blow-off
- 20 feature allowing fluid flow from said compression fluid chamber when fluid pressure in said compression fluid chamber is equal to or greater than a threshold pressure; and
- a second external adjuster permitting external adjustment of the threshold pressure required to allow fluid flow through said blow-off feature;
- wherein external adjustments made by said second external adjuster and said
- 25 first external adjuster have no effect on each other.

79. (Previously Presented) The bicycle fork of claim 78, wherein said lock-out feature and said blow-off feature comprise a lock-out valve and a blow-off valve, respectively.

80. (Previously Presented) A bicycle fork, comprising:

- 5 a compression fluid chamber containing damping fluid;
an adjustable lock-out feature, said adjustable lock-out feature in fluid communication with said compression fluid chamber;
a first external adjuster permitting external adjustment of said lock-out feature to vary the degree to which said lock-out feature allows said damping fluid to flow from
10 said compression chamber;
a blow-off feature associated with said compression fluid chamber, said blow-off feature allowing said damping fluid to flow from said compression fluid chamber when fluid pressure in said compression fluid chamber is equal to or greater than a threshold pressure; and
15 a second external adjuster permitting external adjustment of the threshold pressure required to allow said damping fluid to flow through said blow-off feature;
wherein external adjustments made by said second external adjuster and said first external adjuster have no effect on each other.

20 81. (Previously Presented) The bicycle fork of claim 80, wherein said lock-out feature and said blow-off feature comprise a lock-out valve and a blow-off valve, respectively.

82. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a bicycle fork having user operable lock-out and user adjustable blow-off features, said method comprising the step of adjusting a threshold pressure at which said blow-off feature operates, said adjustment step being performed independently of operation of said lock-out feature.

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83. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a bicycle fork having user operable lock-out and user adjustable blow-off features and containing a damping fluid, said method comprising the step of adjusting a threshold pressure that said damping fluid must be subjected to before said blow-off feature operates, said adjustment step being performed independently of operation of said lock-out feature.

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84. (Previously Presented) A method of making a bicycle fork, comprising the steps of:

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a) providing said fork with a user operable lock-out feature;

b) providing said fork with a user adjustable blow-off feature having an adjustable threshold pressure at which said blow-off feature opens and allows fluid flow therethrough;

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c) providing said fork with the ability for its user to make adjustments to said threshold pressure independently of user operation of said lock-out feature.

85. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 84, wherein said steps of providing said fork with lock-out and blow-off features comprises providing said fork with a lock-out valve and a blow-off valve, respectively.

5 86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, further comprising the step of allowing adjustments made to said lock-out valve and said blow-off valve have no effect on each other.

87. (Previously Presented) A method of making a bicycle fork, comprising the steps of:

- 10 a) providing said fork with a damping fluid;
- b) providing said fork with a user operable lock-out feature;
- c) providing said fork with a user adjustable blow-off feature having an adjustable threshold pressure that said damping fluid must be subjected to before said said blow-off feature opens and allows said fluid to flow therethrough;
- 15 d) providing said fork with the ability for its user to make adjustments to said threshold pressure independently of user operation of said lock-out feature.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 87, wherein said steps of providing said fork with lock-out and blow-off features comprises providing said fork with a
20 lock-out valve and a blow-off valve, respectively.

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89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the step of allowing adjustments made to said lock-out valve and said blow-off valve have no effect on each other.

5 90. (Previously Presented) A bicycle fork, comprising:

first and second telescopingly engaged tubes configured to move closer together during compression of said fork;

an adjustable lock-out feature, said lock-out feature having a plurality of operator-selectable positions, a first of said operator-selectable positions of said lock-out feature

10 substantially inhibiting said first and second tubes from moving closer together;

a manually adjustable blow-off feature comprising means for adjustment, independently of any adjustment to said lock-out feature, of an operator-selectable threshold pressure controlling activation of said blow-off feature for allowing said first and second tubes to move closer together in response to a pressure on said blow-off

15 feature equal to or greater than said threshold pressure, even when said lock-out feature is in its first position.

91. (Previously Presented) A bicycle fork, comprising:

20 first and second telescopingly engaged tubes configured to move closer together during compression of said fork;

a damping fluid;

an adjustable lock-out feature, said lock-out feature having a plurality of operator-selectable positions, a first of said operator-selectable positions of said lock-

out feature substantially inhibiting said first and second tubes from moving closer together;

a manually adjustable blow-off feature, said blow-off feature independently adjustable relative to said lock-out feature and said blow-off feature allowing said first and second tubes to move closer together in response to a pressure on said damping fluid being equal to or greater than an operator-selectable threshold pressure even when said lock-out feature is in its first position.

92. (Previously Presented) A bicycle fork, comprising:

first and second tubes configured to move closer together during the compression of said fork;

a manually adjustable lock-out feature, said lock-out feature having a plurality of operator selectable positions, a first of said operator-selectable positions of said lock-out feature substantially inhibiting said first and second tubes from moving closer together;

a manually adjustable blow-off feature comprising means for adjustment, independently of any adjustment to said lock-out feature, of said blow-off feature and having a plurality of operator-selectable positions, each of said operator-selectable positions of said blow-off feature altering the magnitude of the force that must be imparted on said fork for said first and second tubes to move closer together at a given velocity even when said lock-out feature is in its first position.

93. (Previously Presented) A method of making a bicycle fork, including the steps of:

a) providing said fork with a lock-out valve;

- b) providing said lock-out valve with a first external adjuster;
- c) providing said fork with a blow-off valve having a threshold pressure at which said blow-off valve opens and allows fluid flow there through during compression of said fork;
- 5 d) providing said fork with the ability for its user to make tool-less adjustments of said threshold pressure; and
- e) wherein said step of providing said fork with the ability for its user to make tool-less adjustments of said threshold pressure is performed by providing said blow-off valve with a second external adjuster.

10 94. (New) A bicycle fork, comprising:

a first fluid chamber configured to decrease in volume during at least a portion of the compression of said fork;

15 a first valve, said first valve in fluid communication with said first fluid chamber, and having at least two positions; wherein:

in a first position, fluid flow from said first fluid chamber is substantially unrestricted by said first valve, and

in a second position, fluid flow from said first fluid chamber is at least partially blocked by said first valve;

20 a first adjuster positioned externally of said fork, permitting external adjustment of said first valve between at least said two positions;

a second valve associated with said first fluid chamber, said second valve allowing fluid flow from said first fluid chamber when the pressure in said first chamber is equal to or greater than a threshold pressure; and

25 a second adjuster, positioned externally of said fork, said second external adjuster permitting external adjustment of said threshold pressure;

whereby adjustments to said threshold pressure may be made without tools.

30 95. (New) The fork of Claims 94, wherein said second valve is a pressure-relief valve.

96. (New) A bicycle fork, comprising:

a first fluid chamber containing damping fluid;

a first adjustable valve, said first adjustable valve in fluid communication with said first fluid chamber;

5 a first adjuster, positioned externally of said fork, permitting external adjustment of said first valve to vary the degree to which said first valve allows said damping fluid to flow from said first chamber;

a second valve associated with said first fluid chamber, said second valve allowing said damping fluid to flow from said first fluid chamber when fluid pressure in

10 said first fluid chamber is equal to or greater than a threshold pressure; and

a second adjuster, positioned externally of said fork, permitting external adjustment of the threshold pressure required to allow said damping fluid to flow through said second valve;

15 wherein external adjustments made by said second external adjuster and said first external adjuster may be made independent of each other.

97. (New) The fork of Claim 96, wherein said second valve further comprises a pressure-relief valve.

20 98. (New) A method of making a bicycle fork, comprising the steps of:

a) providing said fork with a first user operable fluid flow control valve;

b) providing said fork with a second user adjustable flow control valve having an adjustable threshold pressure at which said second valve allows fluid flow therethrough;

c) providing said fork with the ability for its user to make adjustments to
5 said threshold pressure independently of user operation of said first fluid flow control valve.

99. (New) The method of Claim 98, wherein said step of providing said fork with a second user adjustable valve further comprises providing said fork with a user
10 adjustable pressure-relief valve.

100. (New) A bicycle fork, comprising:

first and second telescopingly engaged tubes configured to move closer together during compression of said fork;

15 a damping fluid;

a first adjustable fluid flow control valve, said first valve having a plurality of operator-selectable positions, a first of said operator-selectable positions of said first valve substantially inhibiting said first and second tubes from moving closer together;

a second manually adjustable blow-off valve, said second valve
20 independently adjustable relative to said first valve and second valve allowing said first and second tubes to move closer together when the pressure on said damping fluid is equal to or greater than an operator-selectable threshold pressure and even when said first valve is in its first position.

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101. (New) The fork of Claim 100, wherein said second valve comprises a pressure-relief valve.

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